

What is claimed is:

- 1           1.           A method for identifying clinical trial candidates, the method  
2           comprising the steps of:  
3           receiving from a patient clinical data source, patient data including identities of  
4           patients;  
5           replacing the identities of the patients in the patient data with secure patient  
6           codes;  
7           forwarding the patient data with secure patient codes to a clinical trial candidate  
8           identification service;  
9           receiving from the clinical trial candidate identification service a clinical trial  
10          candidate proposal including a secure patient code corresponding to a proposed clinical  
11          trial candidate;  
12          determining an identity of the proposed clinical trial candidate from the secure  
13          patient code; and  
14          forwarding the identity of the proposed clinical trial candidate to a candidate  
15          contact.
- 1           2.           The method of claim 1, wherein the candidate contact is a health care  
2           provider of the candidate.
- 1           3.           The method of claim 1, wherein the candidate contact is the proposed  
2           clinical trial candidate.

1           4.           The method of claim 1, wherein the step of replacing the identities of  
2   the patients in the patient data with secure patient codes comprises encrypting the  
3   identities to create secure patient codes, and the step of determining an identity of the  
4   proposed clinical trial candidate comprises decrypting the secure patient code  
5   corresponding to the proposed clinical trial candidate.

1           5.           The method of claim 1, wherein the step of replacing the identities of  
2   the patients in the patient data with secure patient codes comprises replacing the identities  
3   with unique codes and maintaining a table correlating the identities with the unique  
4   codes, and the step of determining an identity of the proposed clinical trial candidate  
5   comprises looking up in the table an identity of a patient corresponding to the secure  
6   patient code.

1           6.           The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of extracting  
2   patient medical information from the patient data received from a patient clinical data  
3   source.

1           7.           The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of reformatting the  
2   patient data received from a patient clinical data source.

1           8.           The method of claim 1, wherein the clinical data source is a database  
2   containing transactions between health care providers and payers.

1           9.           The method of claim 1, wherein the clinical data source is a hospital  
2   network.

1           10.       The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2           receiving from the candidate contact a status of the clinical trial candidate  
3           proposal; and  
4           forwarding the status to the clinical trial candidate identification service.

1           11.       The method of claim 10, wherein the status includes the identity of the  
2           proposed candidate, and the method further comprises the step of replacing the identity of  
3           the proposed candidate with a secure patient code before forwarding the status to the  
4           clinical trial candidate identification service.

1           12.       The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of:  
2           receiving from the clinical trial candidate identification service, descriptive  
3           information about a clinical trial of the clinical trial candidate proposal; and  
4           forwarding the information to the candidate contact.

1           13.       A method for identifying clinical trial candidates, the method  
2           comprising the steps of:  
3           receiving at least one clinical data record, each said record including clinical data  
4           and a secure patient code uniquely identifying the record without revealing an identity of  
5           a corresponding patient;  
6           receiving a candidate selection criterion for a clinical trial;  
7           searching the at least one clinical data record for a matching clinical data record  
8           based on the candidate selection criterion; and

9           if a matching clinical data record is found, then forwarding a contact request  
10   including at least a secure patient code from the matching clinical data record.

1           14.       The method of claim 13, wherein the contact request is forwarded to a  
2   trusted entity having an identity of a patient corresponding to the forwarded secure  
3   patient code.

1           15.       The method of claim 13, wherein the secure patient code is an  
2   encrypted identity of a patient.

1           16.       The method of claim 13, wherein the secure patient code is a unique  
2   code corresponding to an entry in a table accessible to a trusted entity.

1           17.       The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of receiving  
2   descriptive information about the clinical trial, and wherein the contact request includes  
3   the descriptive information.

1           18.       The method of claim 13, wherein the at least one clinical data record is  
2   received from a data exchange service.

1           19.       The method of claim 18, wherein the secure patient code  
2   corresponding to a matching clinical data record is forwarded to the data exchange  
3   service.

1           20.       The method of claim 13, wherein the at least one clinical data record is  
2   received from an entity controlling a database containing transactions between health  
3   care providers and payers.

1           21.           The method of claim 13, wherein the secure patient code  
2     corresponding to a matching clinical data record is forwarded to an entity controlling a  
3     database containing transactions between health care providers and payers.

1           22.           The method of claim 13, further comprising the step of:  
2             maintaining records of matching clinical data records; and  
3             wherein the step of forwarding a contact request including a secure patient code is  
4     performed only if that code has not already been forwarded.

1           23.           A method for selecting clinical trial candidates, the method comprising  
2     the steps of:  
3             periodically receiving clinical data records, each said record including clinical  
4     data and a secure patient code uniquely identifying the record without revealing an  
5     identity of a corresponding patient;  
6             periodically searching the data records to identify records of clinical trial  
7     candidates.

1           24.           A system for identifying clinical trial candidates, comprising:  
2             a data exchange service for receiving patient records from a patient clinical data  
3     source and replacing identities of patients in each patient record with a secure patient  
4     code;  
5             a clinical trial candidate identification service for receiving the patient records  
6     with secure patient codes from the data exchange service, and identifying a patient record  
7     as a clinical trial candidate.

1           25.       The system of claim 24, wherein the clinical trial candidate  
2   identification service forwards a secure patient code of the identified patient record to the  
3   data exchange service, and the data exchange service determines the identity of the  
4   patient for contacting the patient.

1           26.       The system of claim 24, wherein the data exchange service receives a  
2   status of the clinical trial candidate proposal, replaces an identity of the proposed  
3   candidate with a secure patient code; and forwards the status to the clinical trial candidate  
4   identification service.

1           27.       The system of claim 24, wherein the clinical trial candidate  
2   identification service is further for receiving candidate selection criteria for a clinical  
3   trial, and the clinical trial candidate identification service identifies a patient record based  
4   on the candidate selection criteria.

1           28.       The system of claim 24, wherein the data exchange service replaces  
2   the identities of the patients with secure patient codes that are encryptions of the identities  
3   of the patients.

1           29.       The system of claim 24, wherein the data exchange service replaces  
2   the identities of the patients with secure patient codes that are unique codes, and the data  
3   exchange service further comprises a lookup table correlating each unique code with a  
4   patient code.

1           30.       The system of claim 24, wherein the data exchange service is further  
2   for extracting patient medical information from the patient data received from a patient  
3   clinical data source.

1           31.       The system of claim 24, wherein the data exchange service is further  
2   for reformatting the patient data received from a patient clinical data source.

1           32.       The system of claim 24, wherein the clinical data source is a database  
2   containing transactions between health care providers and payers.

1           33.       The system of claim 24, wherein the clinical data source is a hospital  
2   network.